

Celebrating 15 Years

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY

IDW  
ISSUE  
0  
FCBD

# ROM



RYALL  
GAGE  
MESSINA



Far, far away, in another galaxy, the knights of the Solstar Order, defenders of justice and truth, have been ambushed by the evil magicians, the Dire Wraiths. The Solstar Order has prevailed and is now seeking out their scattered enemies.

One of these knights has followed the trail of the Dire Wraiths all the way to Earth. This one, the Dire Wraiths fear more than all others. This one has hounded them and kept them underground for centuries. This one alone could wipe them off the face of creation.

*He is ROM,  
Lord of the Solstar Order.  
Rom, the Wraithslayer.*

# ROM



Plot and Script by **Chris Ryall & Christos Gage**  
Pencils, Inks & Colors by **David Messina**  
Additional Inks by **Michele Pasta**  
Letters by **Shawn Lee**  
Publisher **Ted Adams**

Special Thanks to Derryl Degriest, David Erwin, Mark Weber, Ed Lane, Beth Artale, Michael Kelly, and Michael Mantlo.

Dedicated to Bill Mantlo and Sal Buscema

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HIGHWAY 101, ALONG THE  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA  
COAST. 10:30 PM.

PROBABLY  
ANOTHER  
BUNCH  
OF KIDS  
LET THEIR  
BEACH BONFIRE  
GET TOO BIG.

YEAH, WELL,  
IF IT REACHES  
THE WOODS,  
WE'VE GOT A  
MAJOR—

P-HUH?

WHAT'S  
UP?

I'M DOING 90!  
BUT SOMEONE'S  
SUDDENLY RIGHT  
ON OUR A—

WHOA!

WARRR

THAT THING'S  
GOTTA BE  
DOING 100 AT  
LEAST! WHAT'S  
THE HURRY?

I'M KINDA  
RETHINKING THE  
WHOLE BONFIRE  
THING...



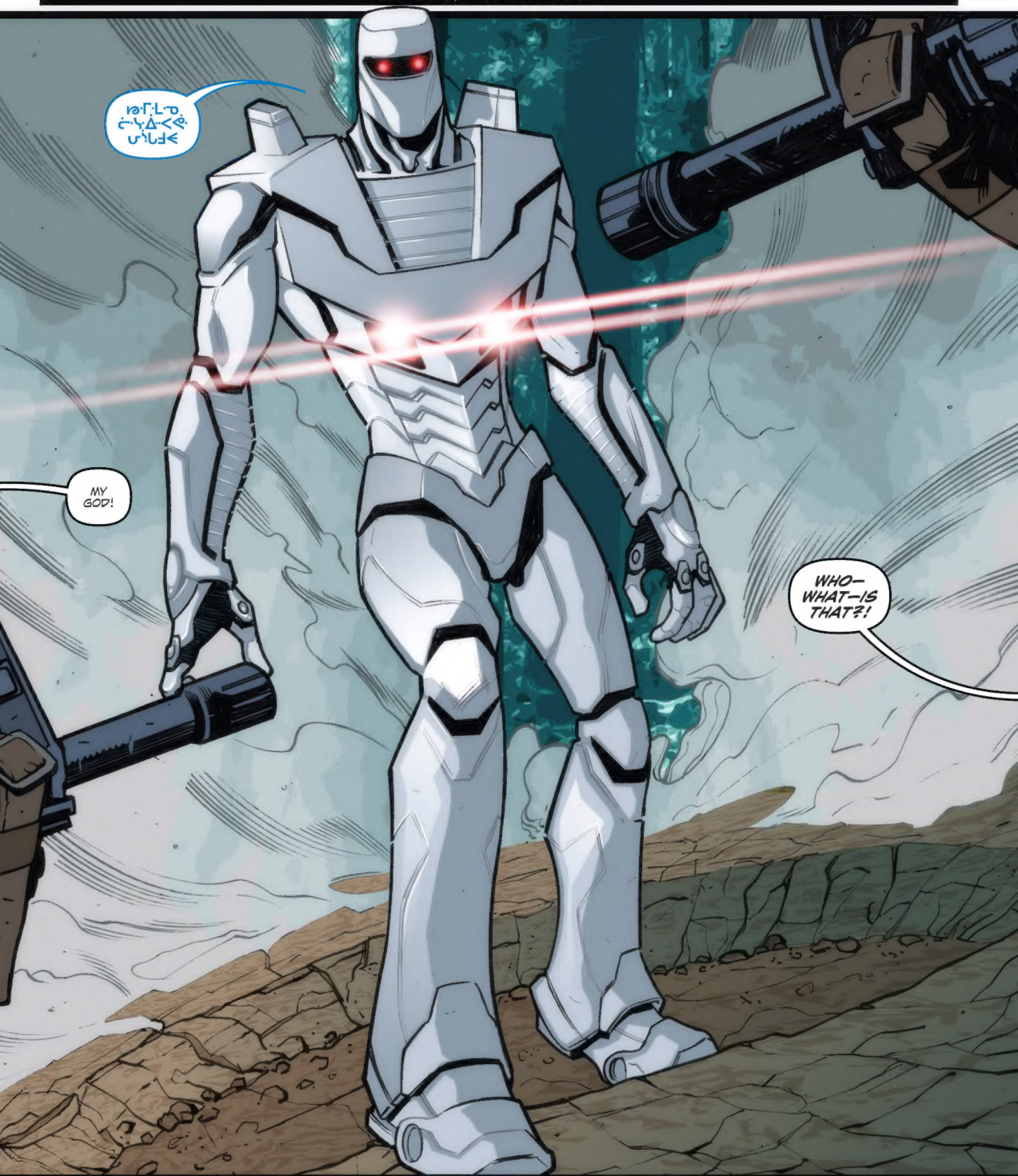




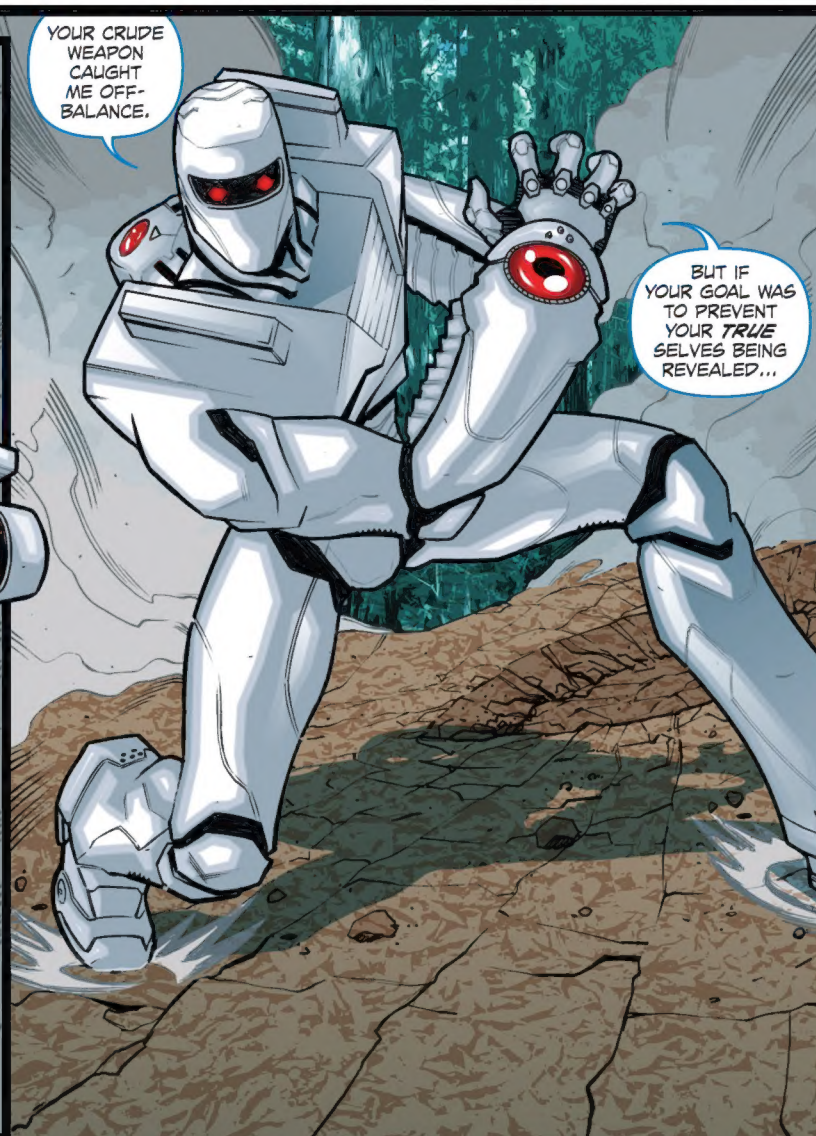
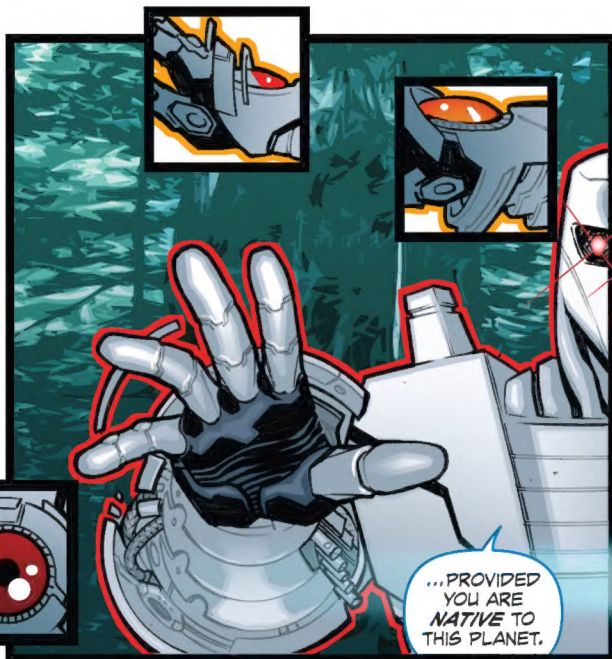
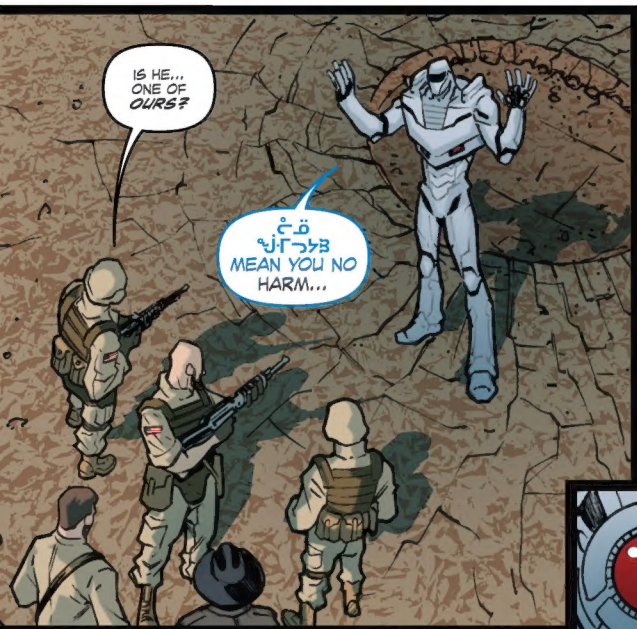
IDW PUBLISHING AND HASBRO ENTERTAINMENT PROUDLY PRESENT  
THE ARRIVAL OF **ROM**

# EARTHFALL: PRELUDE

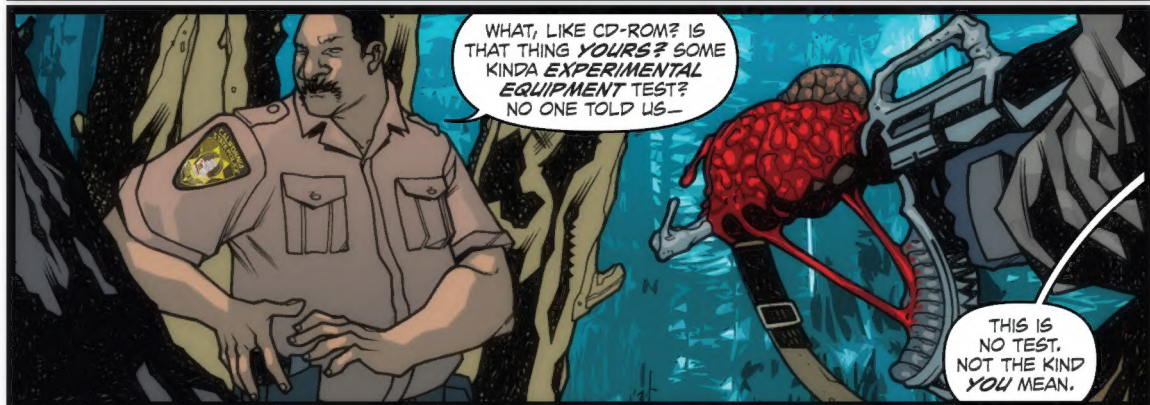
BY RYALL, GAGE & MESSINA



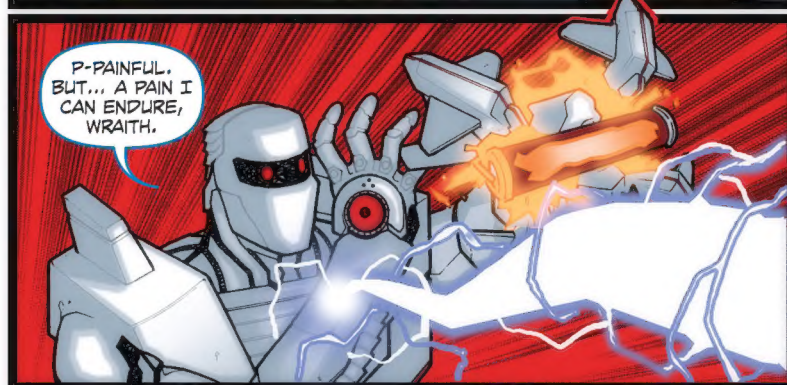
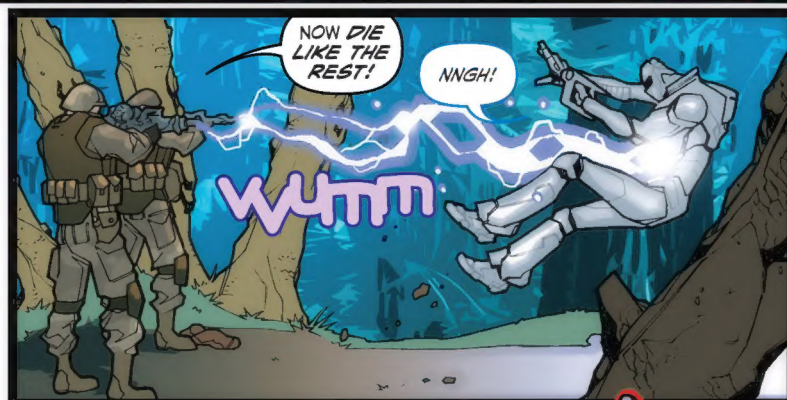
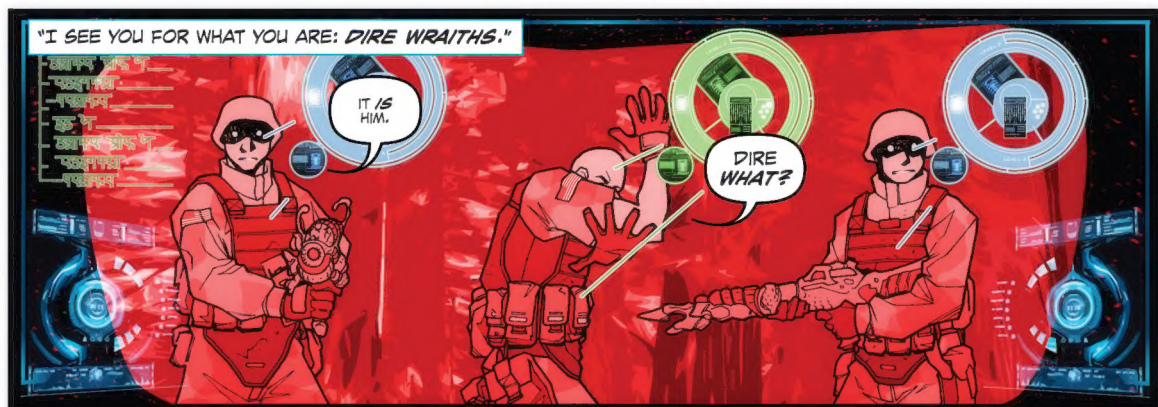




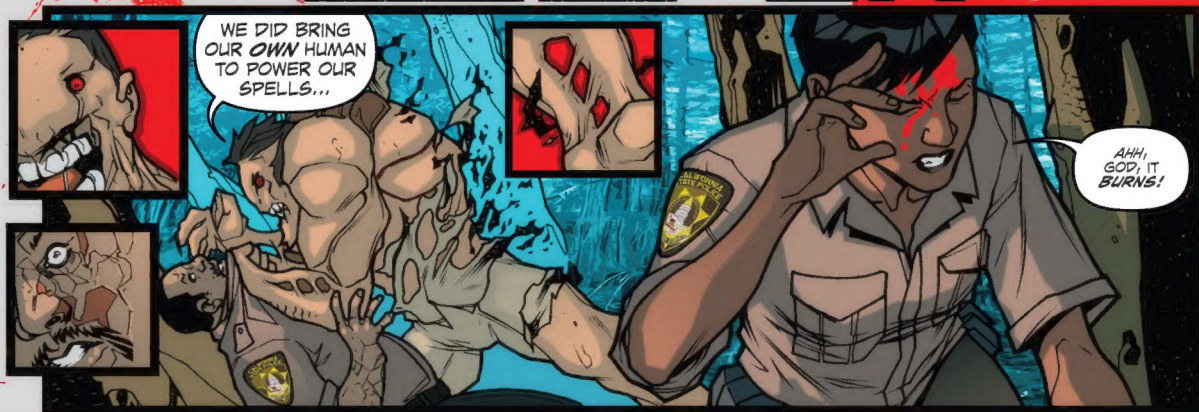




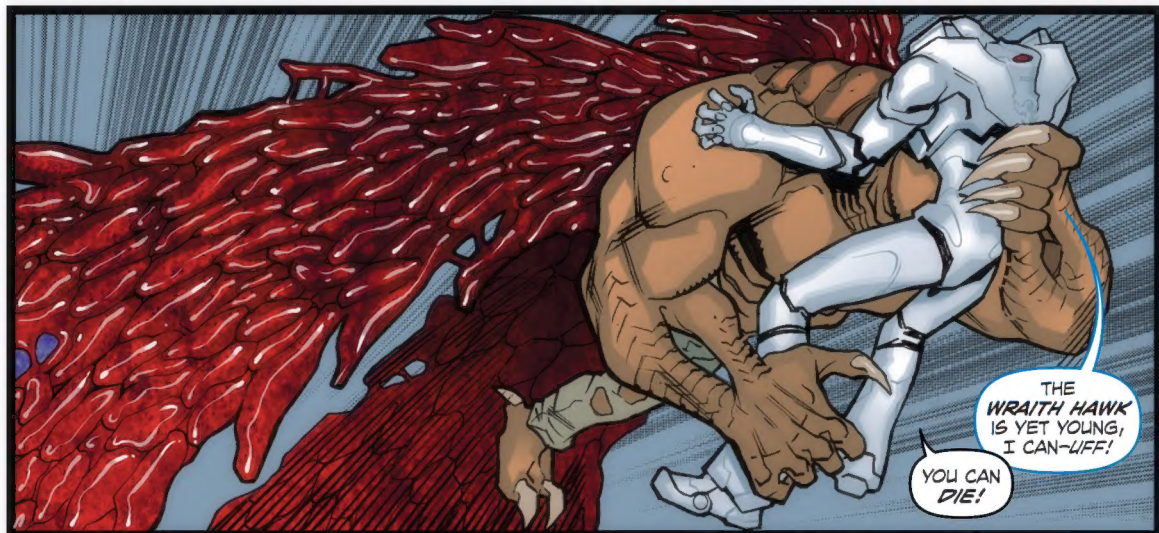
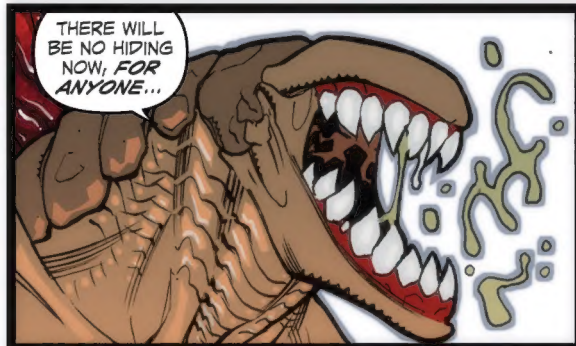
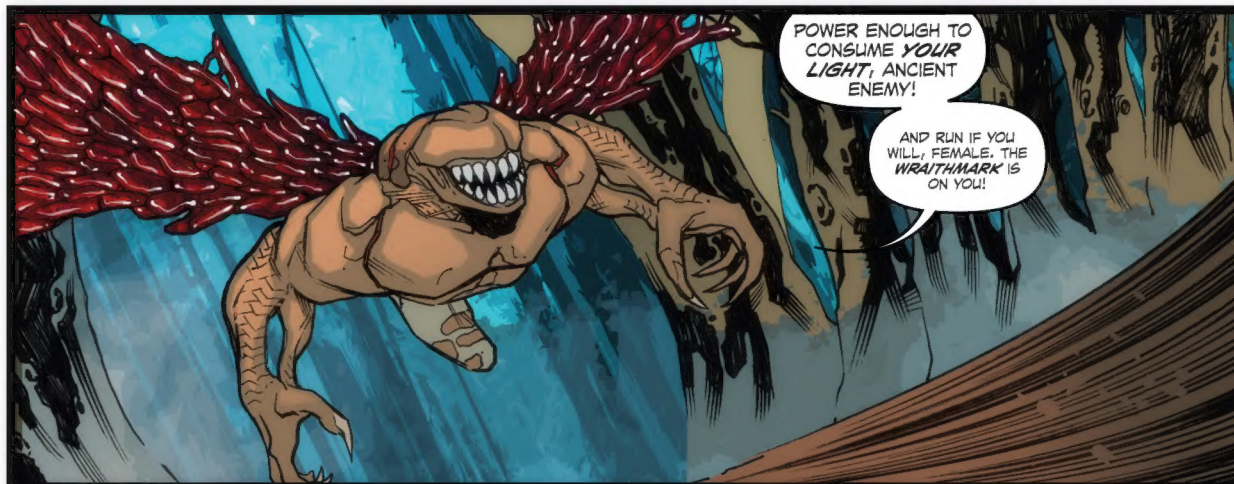








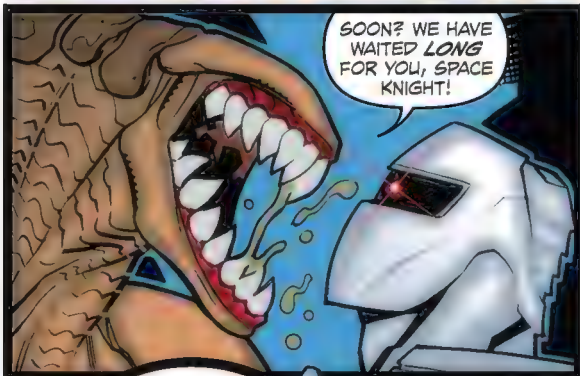




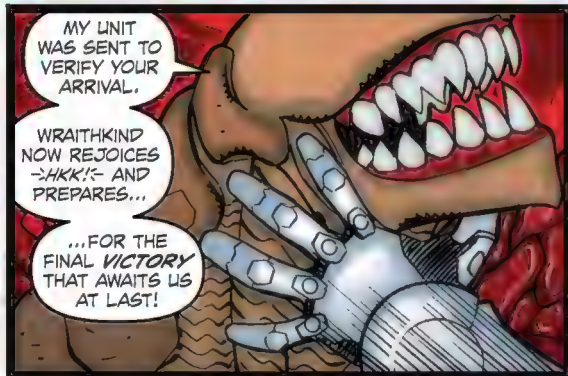




YOU HAVE  
INFECTED THIS  
WORLD DEEPLY,  
TO HAVE FOUND  
ME SO SOON.



SOON? WE HAVE  
WAITED *LONG*  
FOR YOU, SPACE  
KNIGHT!



MY UNIT  
WAS SENT TO  
VERIFY YOUR  
ARRIVAL.

WRAITHKIND  
NOW REJOICES  
-HKK!- AND  
PREPARES...

...FOR THE  
FINAL VICTORY  
THAT AWAITS US  
AT LAST!

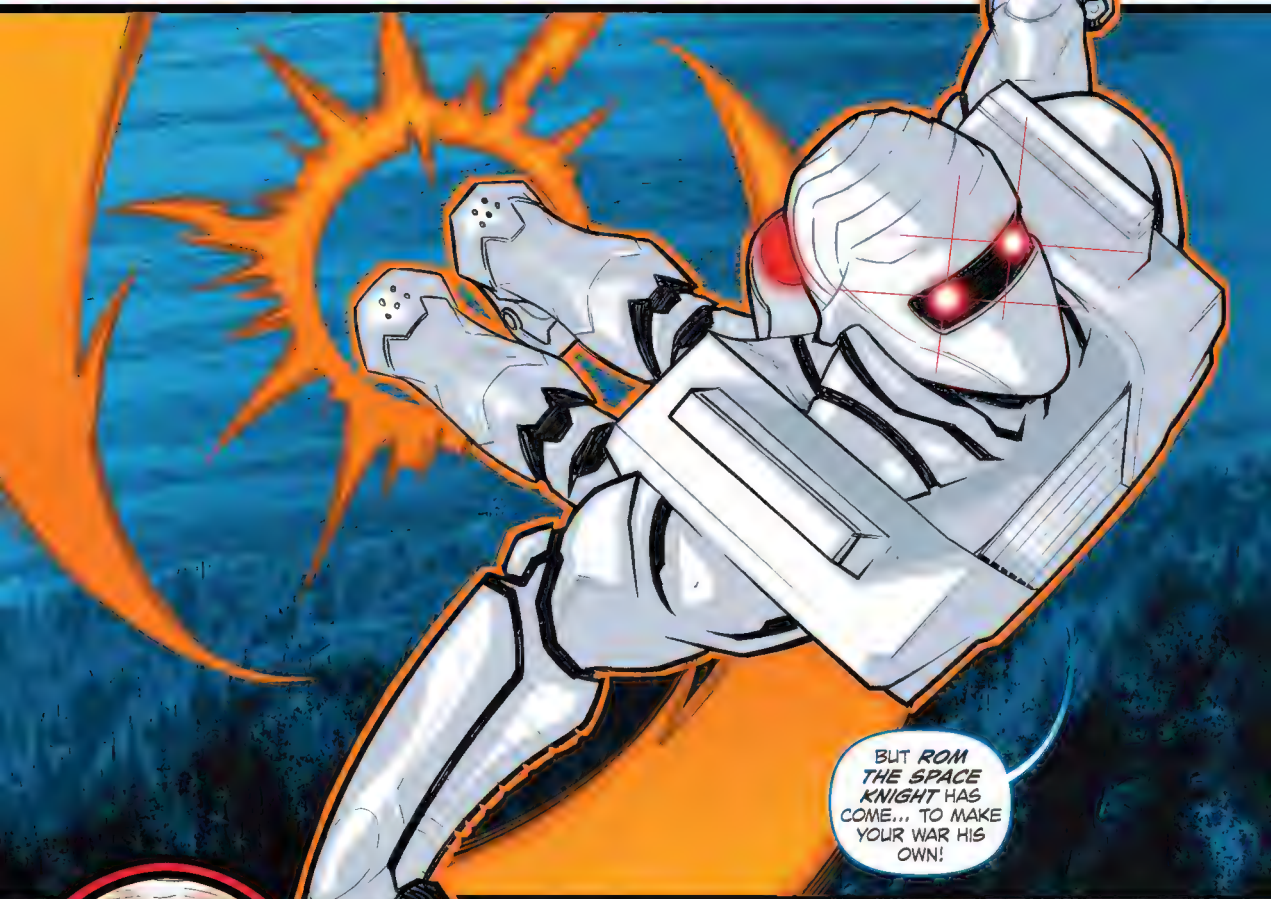
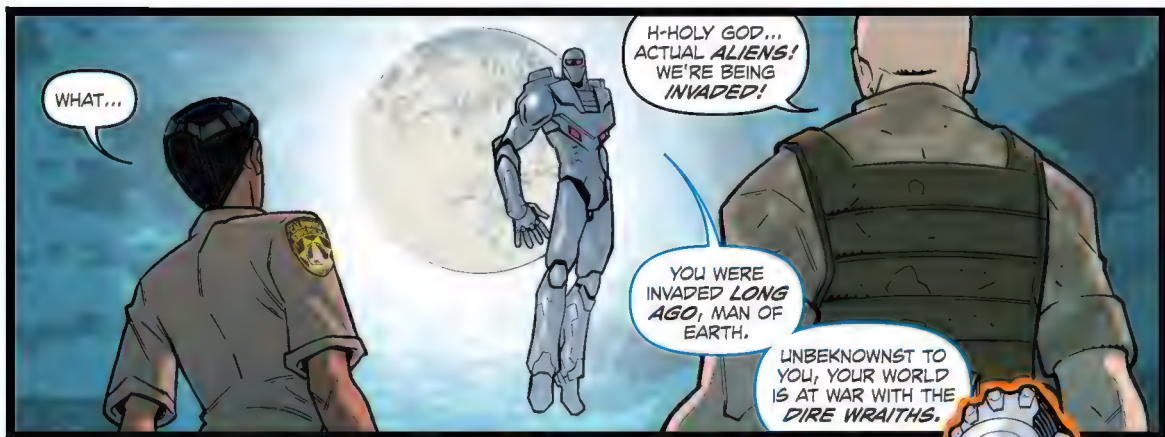


ONE  
THING AWAITS  
YOU, WRAITH.  
THE SAME END  
SCORES OF  
OTHERS BEFORE  
YOU FOUND.

ONLY MY  
NEUTRALIZER  
AWAITS YOU  
ALL!

GLEEARGHHH!

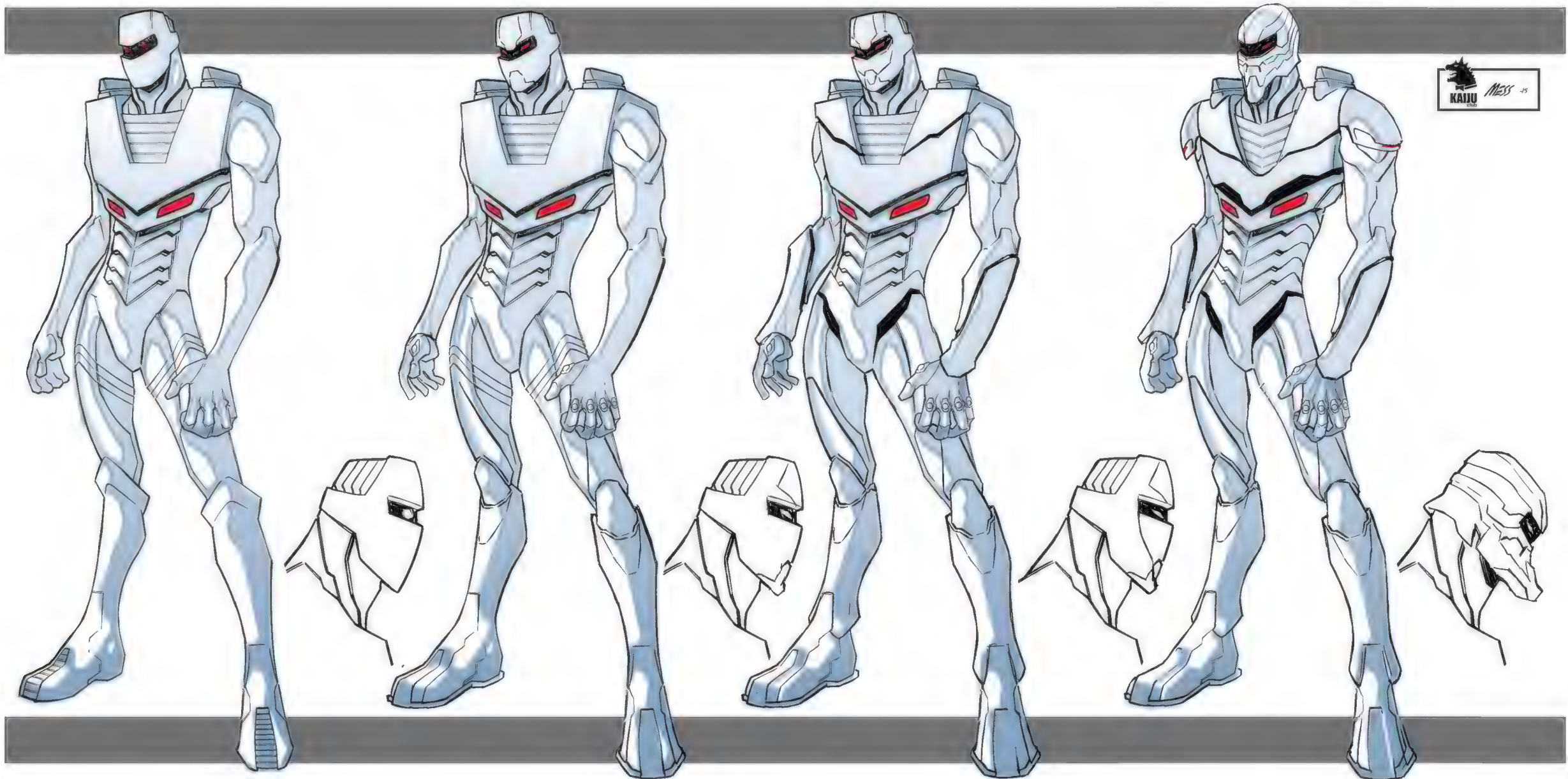




JUST WHAT ARE DIRE WRAITHS? WHY ARE THEY AT WAR WITH ROM? AND JUST WHO IS ROM, ANYWAY?  
ANSWERS, NEW QUESTIONS, AND MUCH COSMIC MAGIC AND MYSTERY ARE COMING YOUR WAY MONTHLY STARTING THIS JULY!



Thanks for joining us for this Free Comic Book Day launch of Rom! Hope you join us every month when the ongoing series launches in July! Also, want to be a part of the grand comics tradition of the letters page? Then let's hear from you! Send along any thoughts, fan art, or other ROM-related missives to: [ROMcomics@idwpublishing.com](mailto:ROMcomics@idwpublishing.com)



Early Head and Body Studies by **David Messina**





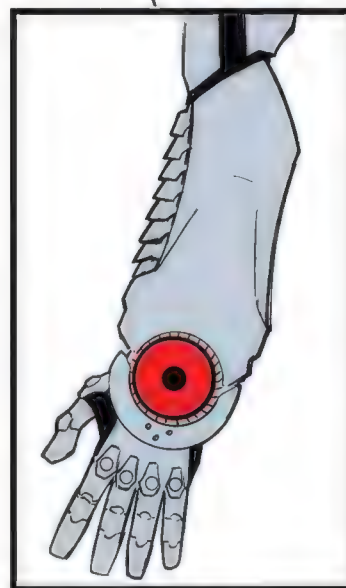
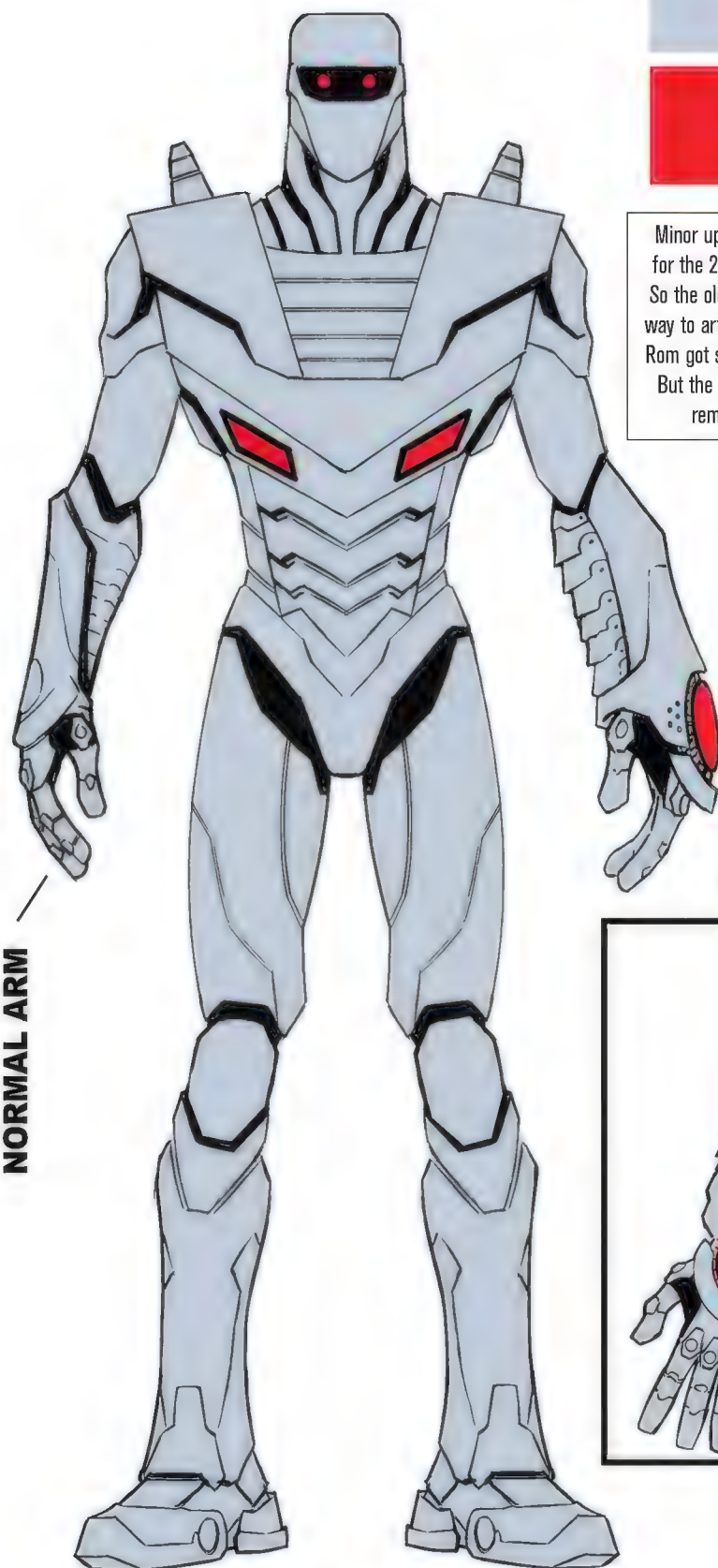
**COCDD9**



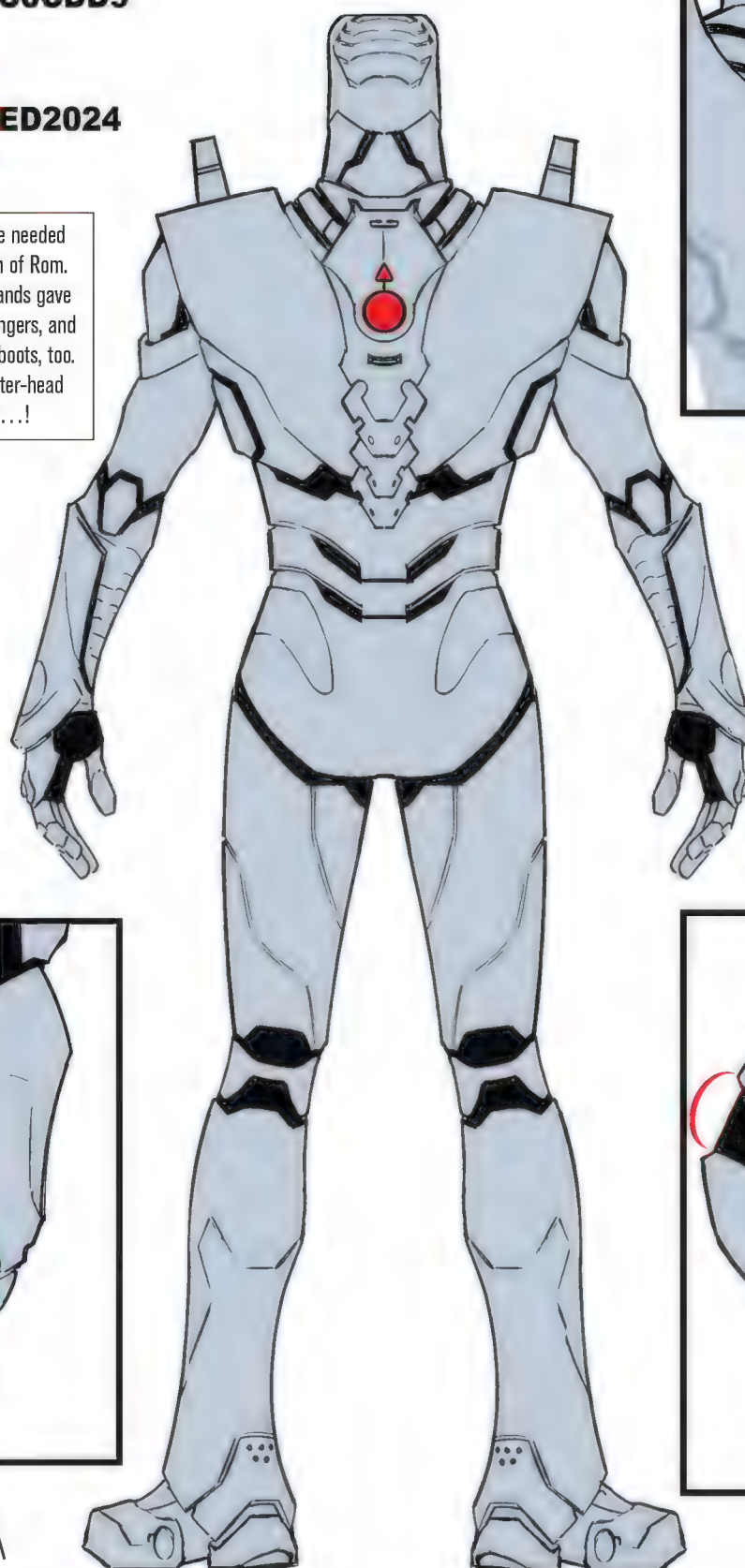
**ED2024**

Minor updates were needed for the 2016 version of Rom. So the old flipper-hands gave way to articulated fingers, and Rom got some new boots, too. But the iconic toaster-head remains intact...!

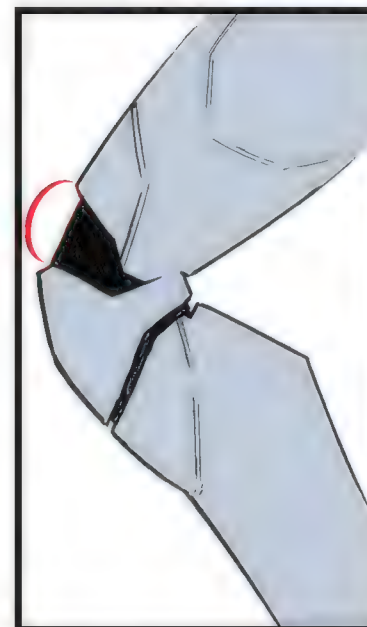
**NORMAL ARM**



**ENERGY ANALYZER  
MODE**



**BLACK PARTS  
OF THE ARMOR  
ARE THE MOST  
FLEXIBLE ONES**



*MESS* -15





# TRANSFORMERS

## READING GUIDE

### Prequels



**AUTOCRACY**



**MONSTROSITY**



**PRIMACY**



**LAST STAND  
OF THE  
WRECKERS**



**CHAOS THEORY**



**DRIFT**

### MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

More Than Meets The Eye reunites the fan-favorite creative team behind Last Stand of the Wreckers and sends the Transformers on an epic quest to the farthest reaches of the Transformers Universe—and beyond!

### DARK CYBERTRON

### ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

The war for Cybertron is over—now the hard part begins! Bumblebee's provisional government is struggling and Prowl defends it against the DECEPTICONS but how far will he go—and who will choose to stand by his side?

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AVAILABLE NOW!**



### DRIFT EMPIRE OF STONE

DRIFT RETURNS! After leaving the Autobots in disgrace, he's now alone on a mission to clean up the darkest depths of the galaxy—until RATCHET shows up to try to bring him home! Also contains bonus content including creator interviews, behind-the-scenes info, an art gallery, and more!



Volume 1



Volume 1



Volume 2



Volume 3



Volume 4



Volume 5



Volume 6



Volume 7



Volume 8



coming  
soon

Volume 9

THE END OF EVERYTHING!  
SHOCKWAVE makes a move millions of years in the planning—an ultimate strategy to remake Cybertron and destroy both the Autobots and Decepticons!



Volume 1



Volume 2



Volume 3



Volume 1



Volume 2



Volume 3



Volume 4



Volume 5



Volume 6



Volume 7



coming  
soon

Volume 8

### WINDBLADE

In the aftermath of DARK CYBERTRON, WINDBLADE takes the planet by storm! But where did she come from—and what does her secret mean to the future of the TRANSFORMERS?



Volume 1



coming  
soon

Volume 2

### COMBINER WARS

The AUTOBOTS and DECEPTICONS' uneasy peace is threatened by the flames of war! STARScream—ruler of CYBERTRON—makes contact with WINDBLADE'S home world—and the only defense against a new CYBERTRONIAN EMPIRE are COMBINERS—multiple CYBERTRONIANS joining together into huge, dangerous forms!



Volume 1



**PUNISHMENT REDEMPTION**



**SINS OF  
THE  
WRECKERS**

**ONE SHOTS AND  
NEW SERIES**



EXCLUSIVE PROLOGUE

# ACTION man

BARBER | EVENHUIS | BOVE

ISSUE 1  
IN STORES  
JUNE







REGULAR COVER  
Art by Chris Evenhuis

Written by John Barber  
Art by Chris Evenhuis  
Colors by John-Paul Bove  
Lettering by Shawn Lee  
Edits by Carlos Guzman  
Publisher Ted Adams

Special Thanks to Derryl Deprinet, David Erwin, Grant Gle, Ed Lamm, Beth Arble, and Michael Kelly.

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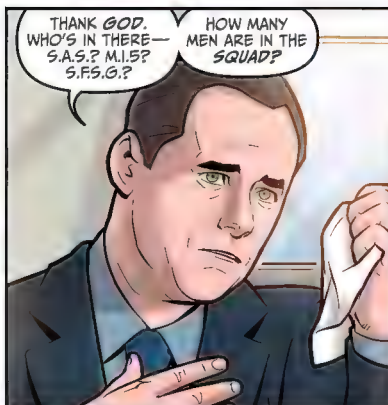
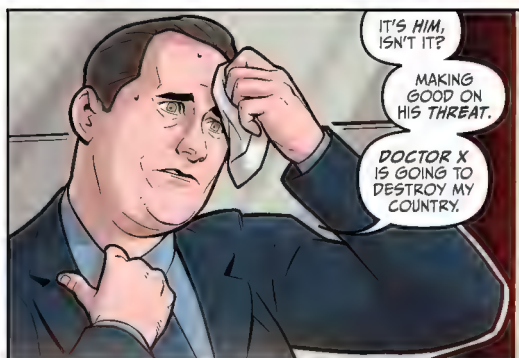
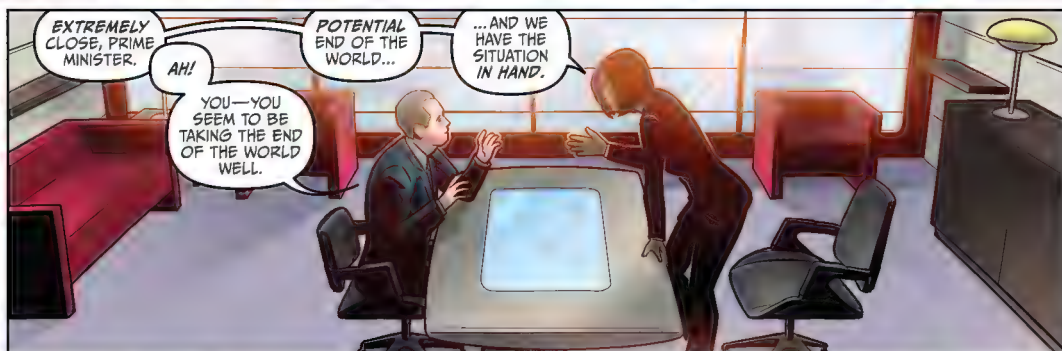
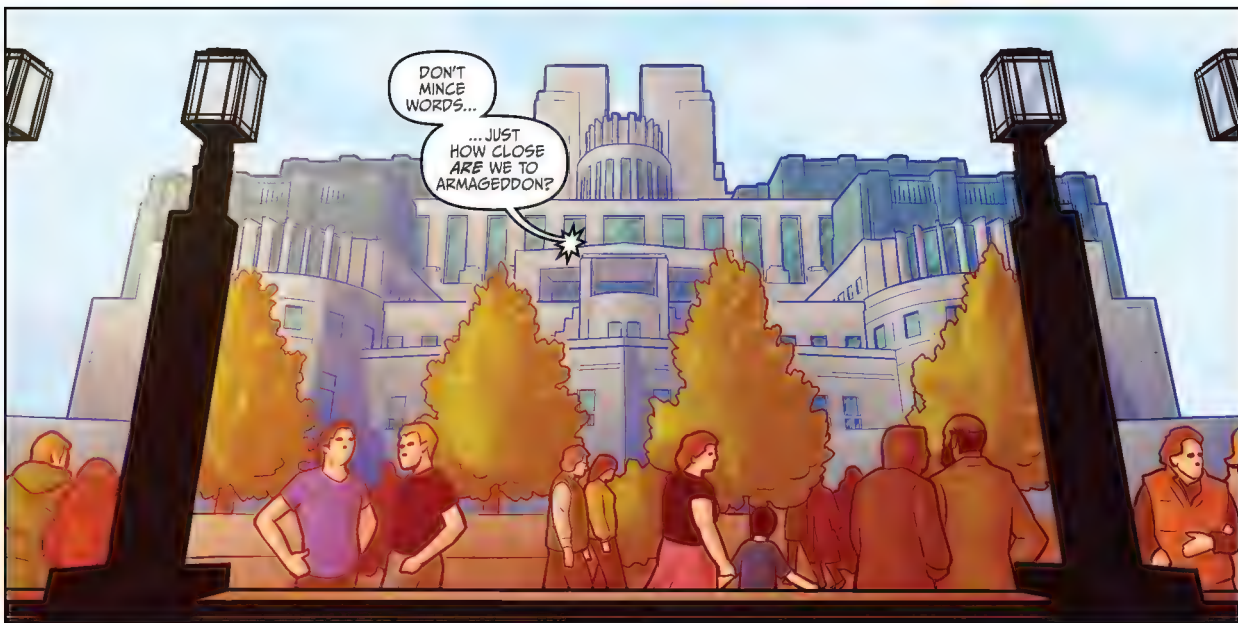
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"...BUT WHO SAID ANYTHING  
ABOUT A SQUAD?"

# ACTION man TO THE VICTORS THE SPOILS

TALK  
TO ME,  
IAN.  
WHERE  
ARE  
YOU?



YOU'RE HERE!  
FANTASTIC.

I'M UNDER  
FIRE IN, UH,  
LABORATORY  
6-C-SUB-  
LEVEL FIVE.

I'VE TOLD YOU  
A MILLION TIMES  
TO LEAVE THE BIG  
JOBS TO ME.

DOCTOR X'S  
ORGANIZATION IS  
TOO DANGEROUS  
TO INFILTRATE.

WELL, GOOD  
NEWS— LESSON  
LEARNED. HE'S  
TRIGGERED THE  
DEVICE.

I KNOW. I'M  
ON MY WAY TO  
STOP IT—





—I JUST HAVE TO RUN AN ERRAND, FIRST.



'SA FAIR COP.



NOW MOVE. THE WORLD'S NOT GOING TO SAVE ITSELF.

WE'VE GOT ABOUT TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN SECONDS TO GET SIX LEVELS DOWN.

\*ABOUT\*?

GOOD THING I KNOW A SHORT CUT.



BESTLEY, DO YOU READ ME?

LOUD AND CLEAR, A.M.



THE PRIME MINISTER IS WITH ME.

UH, HI. IS THAT REALLY ACTION MAN?

I'VE RECOVERED AGENT NOBLE AND WE'RE PROCEEDING TO DISARM THE DOOMSDAY DEVICE.



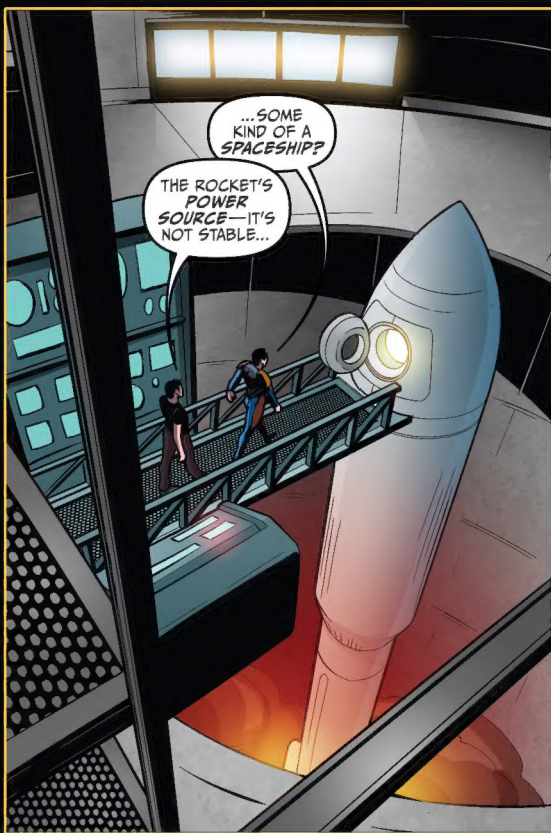
HE REALLY TALKS LIKE THAT?

YOU GET USED TO—

SPLASH

WHAT WAS THAT?





SHUMMP









**ACTION MAN IS DEAD...**



*IAN NOBLE BECOMES THE NEW ACTION MAN NEXT MONTH IN ACTION MAN #1  
FROM IDW PUBLISHING—AVAILABLE WHEREVER COMICS ARE SOLD!*



# ACTION man

They had me at "Action Man."

Here's the thing—if you're reading this, you could be anywhere on the spectrum of "never heard of Action Man" to "nothing means more to me than Action Man." Hopefully we got you onboard, either way.

Here's the story: Hasbro started making the original G.I. Joe toy in 1964. At this point, G.I. Joe was about 12" tall, and was "America's *moveable* fighting man"—this wasn't the set of characters with Snake Eyes and Duke and Scarlett and Roadblock and everybody. This was an "action figure" with uniforms and accessories and dog tags—but no real personality yet. There were different versions—a soldier, sailor, pilot, and marine—but all the same figure.

One of these figures made its way to the U.K., when Hal Belton, Sales Director for British toy company Palitoy, gave one to his grandson. Just like kids in the U.S., that kid loved it.

So—cutting to the chase—in 1966 Palitoy licensed G.I. Joe from Hasbro... but G.I. Joe is a very American name and set-up. So—and people argue who came up with this name—somebody brought up Action Man as a name, and boom... the legend was born.

Over the next few years, the Action Man and G.I. Joe figures influenced each other—Action Man developed flocked hair and hands that grip; G.I. Joe developed moving "Eagle" eyes.

Action Man expanded the repertoire beyond the scale G.I. Joe offered, to include more specifically British uniforms—both of the "sportsman" variety and sets containing detailed, specific, "Ceremonial" uniforms.

By the early 1980s, on both sides of the Atlantic, sales had flagged. And both sides, Action Man and G.I. Joe, relaunched as smaller 3 ¾ inch figures—G.I. Joe became a wide-ranging military team, and Action Force replaced Action Man and brought in a greater variety of military figures, like a British Commando or an S.A.S. Frogman, and international soldier figures.

Later waves of Action Force established specific personalities, like the growing G.I. Joe team had done. Eventually Palitoy dissolved and Hasbro took over Action Force, bringing it more in line with the G.I. Joe concept.

I should add here—this is not an Action Force comic you're reading. Action Force is awesome, but that is not this. See, while the original G.I. Joe character was eventually subsumed into the G.I. Joe team (becoming Joe Colton, as seen in many comics and on the silver screen), Action Man continued to exist as a separate concept.

In the early 1990s, Hasbro revived Action Man as a non-military action/adventure character, and a direct-to-video animated series was produced. This was far from the original idea of a multi-skilled military man, but introduced a generation to the character. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Hasbro made retro-style figures...

...and now we're here, at Action Man's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, when our good friend Michael Kelly over at Hasbro mentioned Action Man to us—and as soon as I heard, I had an idea.

See, like I said, this isn't Action Force. This was a new take on Action Man—or, maybe more accurately, a return to the original idea of Action Man. But the world of 2016 isn't the world of 1966—the original idea, at least to me, suggested something new... the idea of a new hero having to fill impossible shoes.

I pitched it to Hasbro, and we got the go-ahead, and here I was, writing the adventures of a beloved national hero. I wanted to do something fast-paced and funny, but ultimately serious in tone. Something that respected the source material but wasn't wallowing in nostalgia.

Fortunately, I got a great collaborator in the form of Chris Evenhuis. Our fantastic editor, Carlos Guzman, suggested Chris, and I realized—if there was any way he'd do it—he'd be perfect. Precise and clean artwork with a real sense of life and vitality, and a sparkle in the eye. The character acting was wonderful, the designs perfect. Chris made sense of my dense little script and made the whole thing sing.

And then we got my old friend John-Paul Bove—a fantastic colorist and writer—to come in and color the thing up, and wow, the results speak for themselves.

Getting to be here, on Free Comic Book Day, on the other side of this amazing Rom comic, is an honor—sorry, an honour—and a privilege. We vow to do right by these characters when we return next month and Ian Noble's tale continues.

How do you take over for the guy who saved the world?

Here's a hint—it won't be easy.

Thanks for joining us.

John Barber  
January, 2016